

**Lowestoft Town Council**  
**Meeting of the Parks and Open Spaces Sub-Committee**  
**First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE**  
**19:00 on 10 December 2024**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllrs Neil Coleby, Christine Moore, John Murray, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger (Deputy Chair) and Elise Youngman (Chair)

**In Attendance:** Lauren Elliott (Senior Committee and Project Clerk) and Taylor Williams (Committee Clerk and Planning Assistant)

**94. Welcome**

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report was explained and the meeting was welcomed.

**95. To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Robert Breakspear, Wendy Brooks and Deborah Ray with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

Cllr Pitts was absent with no apologies received.

**96. Declarations of Interests and Dispensations**

96.1. To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests from councillors on items on the Agenda – Cllr Pearce declared he was Chair of the Gunton Residents Association. Cllr Moore declared she was an employee of East Suffolk Council (ESC).

96.2. To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted – No written requests for dispensations had been received.

**97. To consider the draft minutes of the meetings on 19 November 2024**

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the draft minutes as an accurate record; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

**98. Public Forum**

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public – No advance comments had been received and no members of the public were in attendance.

**99. To note a change to the Terms of Reference of this Sub-Committee increasing its financial delegation to £7,500**

This increase had been approved by the Assets, Inclusion and Development Committee (AID). The Financial Regulations would need to be updated on the paragraph that details the financial delegations to the Sub-Committee.

**100. To monitor expenditure by this Sub-Committee from its delegated budget**

To date, £11,930.12 had been spent from the £25,750 Parks Repair & Maintenance budget.

Cllr Pearce proposed a suggestion be made to Full Council regarding the purchase of a ride-on mower it is due to consider, to allocate half the budget from the Parks Repair and Maintenance budget, and the other half from the Tennis Courts reserve; seconded by Cllr Coleby; all in favour.

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### **101. To receive feedback from the stand-alone meeting concerning the Five-Year Plans**

Officers were asked to provide a matrix of the plans to the next meeting, with known costs to be included alongside details on whether the project would be directly funded (and from what budget stream) and where external funding could be sought.

### **102. To consider budget requirements for the 2025-2026 financial year and make a recommendation to Budget and Loan Working Group for consideration**

Per the previous resolution, the Parks Capital budget (£45,000) and Parks Repair and Maintenance budget (£25,000) would need to be maintained in real terms and inflation linked. The Toilets, Play Area and Triangle Market budgets would also help fund the Five-Year Plans.

### **103. To consider the provision of seating and planters for the site adjacent to the Triangle Market** AID had previously received plans for this project and approved the purchase of play panels.

The Facilities and Contracts Manager had measured the site and estimated a cost of £23,850 to complete the project. This included the bench configuration and stand-alone planters (plus installation and materials) and excluded the cost of play panels.

The Grounds Maintenance Team (GMT) reviewed the suggestion to install play panels on the fence and reported the fence would not be able to support the weight and suggested a living wall be developed (which could be undertaken inhouse).

The anticipated year-end amount for the Triangle Market budget in 2024/2025 was £17,900, with all utilities already budgeted for an no new commitments required from the budget.

Cllr Pearce proposed a recommendation be made to Full Council to approve the plan and maximum budget submitted by officers, with the budget to be funded first from the Triangle Market Reserve and any income received, second from unallocated funding remaining of the Community Infrastructure Levy and third from residue of the Parks and Open Spaces Capital budget; seconded by Cllr Youngman; all in favour.

The Sub-Committee were unable to make recommendations directly to Full Council, therefore it was unanimously agreed to amend the proposal and make the recommendation to the AID meeting in January 2025, by which time a formal quote and completed plan would be available to be reviewed by the Committee.

### **104. To consider the implementation of a parks annual calendar**

The Sub-Committee noted the previous decision to not order any bulbs for 2024/2025 and requested a meeting be scheduled early 2025 with the GMT to discuss future planting plans, the labour time and training requirements. It was suggested in early Spring the Sub-Committee members visit various parks and open spaces to identify works to be completed.

Cllr Pearce proposed officers review the draft calendar supplied by Cllr Coleby and use it as a guide to provide items to each monthly Parks and Open Spaces meeting to inform discussions throughout year, with input from the GMT, and for a comprehensive discussion to be scheduled with the GMT on planting in early 2025; seconded by Cllr Murray; all in favour.

### **105. To receive a plan on tree works for the North Denes**

The Parks and Grounds Maintenance Manager had provided a phased approach to the tree works for the North Denes, which had been reviewed by the ESC Tree Officer, on the removal

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of sycamores in the area as the area was too dense due to the self-seeding of the species. A full plan had not yet been received, but officers were seeking quotes for the works. It was intended to schedule the works before the nesting seasons, but that would be dependent on the level of work required.

Cllr Pearce proposed to endorse the recommendation from the ESC Tree Officer and the Parks and Grounds Maintenance Manager for the work to be undertaken, with funding to be allocated from the 2024/2025 Parks Capital, Repair and Maintenance and Tree (if any residue) budgets. The funding would be finalised by the Finance and Governance Committee (F&G) in January 2025. Furthermore, due to the time sensitive nature of the work with the approaching nesting season, the Acting Town Clerk was authorised to use delegated authority to instruct the works once the cost was known and have this endorsed with budget allocations confirmed by AID in January 2025, thus enabling the works to commence before the nesting season. Cllr Coleby seconded the proposal and noted the Sub-Committee would need to consider what could be done to replace the trees as the site was an important nature area. A vote was held with all in favour.

### **106. To receive an update on the feasibility of implementing lighting in the Normanston Park Skate Park**

The Facilities and Contracts Manager was arranging for an electrician to review the fuseboard as it would likely not have the sufficient capacity to handle the increased supply for the skate park lighting. As this would be a costly endeavour, the feasibility of the project would need to be considered before progressing. It was clarified there was currently no issue with the fuseboard and an upgrade would not be required unless the lighting was increased in the park.

If the visit was conducted and the costs acquired before F&G meet in January (and the officers recommended upgrading the fuseboard regardless of lighting the skate park) then a relevant item would be tabled on the F&G agenda. Otherwise, it would be tabled for a future Parks and Open Spaces meeting.

The Sub-Committee agreed it should consider upgrading the fuseboard as future projects for the park would require an increased electrical capacity.

### **107. Date of the next meeting**

21 January 2025 19:00

### **108. Items for the next Agenda and Close**

No items were requested.

### **109. To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, namely any legal issues relating to the matters on this agenda**

*The Chair closed the meeting at 19:45*

Signed: .....

21 January 2025